(b) the number of Indian personnel who took part in the exercises;

(c) whether such exercises are also likely to be held in India; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) Paratroopers of the Indian Army participated in Joint Exercises with US Army in Alaska, USA. One platoon with one aircraft IL-76 participated in the exercise. Future exercise between Special Forces and Paratroopers of both countries would be finalized in a meeting to be held in December, 2002. A joint exercise with US Special Forces is being planned in India in April 2003.

Advanced Surveillance Equipments Along LoC

2121. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Army has requested for the acquisition and supply of advanced surveillance equipment along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Army Headquarters have recommended procurement of surveillance equipment along the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir. Accordingly surveillance equipments like Battle Field Surveillance Radars, Hand Held Thermal Imagers and Unattended Ground Sensors are being procured and deployed along Line of Control.

New Fleet of Aircraft for Dignitaries

2122. SHRI DINA NATH MISHRA:
SHRI S. AGNIRAJ:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering acquisition of a new fleet of Aircrafts for use of dignitaries in India and abroad on the lines of Air Force one of the United States of America;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the estimated cost for purchase and maintenance of these aircrafts?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Government is planning to procure new aircraft for meeting the travel needs of VVIPs and other dignitaries. The cost of the aircraft would be known only after finalisation of negotiations with the vendor.

Request for withdrawal of Controversial Notifications

2123. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any communication from the Chief Minister of Delhi requesting them to withdraw the two controversial notifications issued by the Central Government recently regarding the powers of the State Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Chief Minister of the National Capital Territory of Delhi had requested the Central Government that the instructions issued recently on the definition of the word "Government" in relation to the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the amendments made to the rules relating to the transaction of business rules be withdrawn. However, it was clarified to the Chief Minister, National Capital Territory of Delhi that the protests made over these instructions were not based on facts.

Curtailment of Powers of Delhi Government

2124. SHRI ABANI ROY:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has recently stripped the powers of the State Government of Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons and justification thereof;